

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 126297

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, BBAK, SF

SUBJECT: PROJECTED ACTIVITIES OF IRRIC IN SOUTH AFRICA

REF: (A) JOHANNESBURG 752; (B) CHRISTENSEN-PURCELL
OFFICIAL/INFORMAL LETTER 5/28/75;

1. ELLIOTT WEISS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INVESTOR RESPONSIBILITY RESEARCH CENTER (IRRC), INFORMED DEPARTMENT THAT LATEST EDITION OF SOUTH AFRICAN "SUNDAY TIMES" CARRIED ARTICLE HIGHLY CRITICAL OF IRRIC. WEISS IS CONCERNED THAT ALLEGED CRITICISMS IN ARTICLE COULD HAVE SERIOUS EFFECT ON HIS ORGANIZATION'S UPCOMING SURVEY ON OPERATIONS OF ABOUT 25 MAJOR U.S. FIRMS ACTIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA. WEISS STATED THAT IRRIC IS SENDING OUT TWO-MAN TEAM (ONE OF WHOM IS MYERS) IN CONNECTION WITH THIS PROJECT AND HAD ALREADY DISCUSSED PROJECT WITH U.S. HEAD OFFICES OF FIRMS INVOLVED

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PAGE 02 STATE 126297

AS WELL AS WITH SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON. HE

SAID PLANS FOR PROJECT HAD BEEN APPROVED BY MOST FIRMS AND HAD TACIT AGREEMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY OFFICER. WEISS REMARKED THAT HE WAS CONTACTED TODAY BY SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY AND INFORMED THAT ON BASIS OF INFORMATION IN SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE, IIRC TEAM MIGHT NOT BE ALLOWED INTO SOUTH AFRICA DESPITE FACT THAT MEMBERS ALREADY HAVE VISAS.

2. WEISS NOTED THAT IIRC IS PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATION WHICH UNDERTAKES IN-DEPTH RESEARCH PROJECTS ON BEHALF OF SUBSCRIBERS (WHICH INCLUDE BANKS, TRUST AND INVESTMENT FUNDS, AND INSURANCE COMPANIES) FOR PURPOSE OF ANALYZING SOCIAL ISSUES THAT AFFECT INVESTORS AND CORPORATIONS. WEISS STATED THAT HIS ORGANIZATION HAS NO AX TO GRIND AND HAS ALWAYS TRIED TO PREPARE BALANCED REPORTS ON ALL ISSUES COVERED BY ITS RESEARCH PROJECTS.

3. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE RESUME OF ARTICLE IN QUESTION AS WELL AS COMMENTS BY POSTS ON ANY READILY OBTAINABLE OFFICIAL SOUTH AFRICAN REACTION TO CONTENTS OF ARTICLE BY COB MONDAY JUNE 2, SINCE IIRC TEAM WISHES DISCUSS MATTER WITH US AND SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY ON TUESDAY JUNE 3.

4. REF B COVERED POINTS RAISED BY REF A, NOTING THAT DEPARTMENT OFFICER MET WITH MYERS AND EXPLAINED IN DETAIL CONGEN JOHANNESBURG'S CONCERNS OVER ANY IDENTIFICATION OF OUR CURRENT SURVEY WITH PROPOSED IIRC STUDY. MYERS MENTIONED THAT IIRC HAS CONTACTED HEAD OFFICES OF ALL 25 U.S. FIRMS WHICH HE PLANS TO VISIT IN SOUTH AFRICA AND HAS EXPLAINED PRIVATE NATURE OF IIRC AND ITS STUDY. HE ASKED HEAD OFFICES TO INFORM SOUTH AFRICAN AFFILIATES ACCORDINGLY AND MOST HAVE REPORTEDLY DONE SO. HE SAID HE HAS ALSO WRITTEN DIRECTLY TO AFFILIATES TO EXPLAIN NATURE OF HIS PROJECT. MYERS HOPES TO PAY COURTESY CALL ON LABOR OFFICER BUT APPRECIATES FACT THAT LATTER CANNOT DIVULGE ANY PRIVILEGED INFORMATION ON COMPANIES AND CANNOT ASSOCIATE HIMSELF IN ANY WAY WITH IIRC PROJECT.

5. WE RECOMMEND POSTS CONTINUE OUR SURVEY AS SCHEDULED, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 126297

MAKING CLEAR TO ALL CONCERNED THAT WE ARE NOT RPT NOT ASSOCIATED IN ANY WAY WITH IIRC EFFORT. MYERS HAS PROMISED TO EMPHASIZE THIS POINT AS WELL IN HIS INTER-VIEWS. INGERSOLL

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